

METHOD AND DEVICE FOR SIMULATING DETONATING PROJECTILES

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

5 The present invention refers to a method for simulating the effect of exploding projectiles fired by weapons. Furthermore, the invention refers to a device for carrying out a method for simulating the effect of exploding projectiles fired by weapons.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

10 Known types of detonating projectiles are those fired by ballistic weapons (mortars, artillery). For simulation purposes, the trajectory and the location of the detonation are calculated on the basis of the gun orientation and other parameters. Due to the relatively long time of flight of several seconds, this calculation can be performed by a central computer.

15 Recently, however, infantry weapons have been introduced which also operate according to this principle. These weapons are essentially similar to rifles. The soldier takes aim at the edge of a building, for example, thereby allowing the targeting device to determine the corresponding distance and store it. Then the soldier aims past the edge and fires. The shot travels the previously determined distance and detonates at the end thereof, or at some distance before or behind it. Essentially, it is thereby possible to hit a target behind the aimed edge, or, in simple terms, to shoot to a certain extent "around the corner".

20 Since in particular the time of flight is for this kind of weapon rather in the range of milliseconds, it is not possible to simulate the effect of this weapon by a central computer without admitting an unrealistic delay between the firing and its effect.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

25 It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a method and a device for simulating the effect of detonating projectiles which allows realistically short delays between firing and detonation at the target location.

According to a first aspect of the invention this object is attained by a method wherein a

weapon signal emitted by the weapon when fired is detected by a sensor located near the target area and the sensor prompts at least one associated transmitter to emit an impact signal which is adapted to cover also that portion of the impact area of the simulated explosion which cannot be covered by the weapon signal of the weapon.

5 According to a second aspect of the invention there is provided a device which comprises a sensor and a transmitter. The sensor is effectively linked to the transmitter in such a manner that a weapon signal which is detected by the sensor and which indicates the simulated firing of a projectile having an explosive effect in the target area prompts the emission of an impact signal in the impact area of the simulated projectile by the transmitter.

10 According to a third aspect of the invention in a device according to the second aspect, the sensor is directionally sensitive and preferably comprises a plurality of sensor elements each of which covers a sector of the total angular range covered by the sensor in order to determine the stepwise angle of incidence of the weapon signal emitted by the weapon at least stepwise. The transmitter is adapted to emit the impact signal with a directionally variable range. It particularly
15 comprises a plurality of transmitter elements each adapted to supply approximately a sector with a controllable range. The transmitter is adapted for being triggered by the sensor according to the angle of incidence of the weapon signal of the weapon in such a manner that the area supplied with an effective impact signal by the transmitter represents an improved approximation to the impact area of a projectile exploding in reality.

20 The principal aspect of the method according to the invention is that firing information emitted by the simulated weapon is locally detected and emitted in the impact area of the simulated detonation, i.e. particularly also in the area which is invisible from the position of the shooter. Preferably, a transceiver unit is provided on the obstacle for this purpose. The receiver of this unit records information emitted by the weapon that the shot has been fired and activates the
25 transmitter unit which emits information on the simulated detonation in the impact area. Participants in the exercise who are present in the impact area and equipped with corresponding receivers are thus informed of the fact that they have been hit and are eliminated or considered as injured.

According to a preferred embodiment, the direction from which the weapon is pointed at

the obstacle is furthermore determined in order to be able to demarcate the impact area of the detonation more precisely. In this case it is further preferred that the transmitter also offers the possibility of selectively supplying the impact signal to certain portions of the possible impact area only.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be explained in more detail with reference to an exemplary embodiment illustrated in the figures.

FIG. 1 schematically shows a simulation situation including a weapon and a target area;

FIG. 2 shows an enlarged top view of a transceiver unit; and

FIG. 3 shows a front view of a transceiver unit.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

According to the illustrated embodiment of the invention, a transceiver unit 5 is affixed to the edge 1 of a schematically illustrated building 3. Any other type of target area may be used. It is noted that the size of transceiver unit 5 is shown in FIG. 1 in an exaggerated manner compared to simulated impact area 7 of the detonation.

The purpose of the simulation is to simulate the effect of a projectile fired from simulated weapon 6 approaching on trajectory 9 and detonating at location 10. It is assumed in an idealizing manner that the impact of the explosion at location 10 covers area 7, wherein trajectory 9 is flat. The simulation requires that the corresponding weapon 6 is provided with a device allowing the emission of firing information into the area visible from the weapon. Generally, this would be a simulation device in the weapon 6 using a laser source. Known embodiments of such devices are already capable of compensating elevation and lead by projecting the laser beam into the target area with a lateral and/or vertical deviation. For explosive projectiles and other applications, it is known that the laser device sweeps a larger part of the target area, i.e. that the laser beam is guided over a determined surface in a zigzag movement, for example, thereby activating detectors provided in equipment and on training participants in the impact area.

In the case of the weapon for which the simulation is intended, at first, edge 1 is targeted. The laser beam 8 of the weapon 6 hits transceiver unit 5. If necessary, the receiver of the unit is thereby set to an alarm condition. The receiver is directionally sensitive in order to be able to determine the direction of trajectory 9 at least approximately. Furthermore, the transceiver unit comprises a reflector device 20 which reflects the laser beam back onto itself. This allows the targeting device, here the laser source in the weapon to detect that its beam has hit a transceiver unit 5. Subsequently, as the weapon is pointed at target location 10, the targeting device may deviate the laser beam with respect to the orientation of the weapon or expand it in such a manner that it still hits transceiver unit 5.

When the weapon is fired, a corresponding piece of information is transmitted by the laser beam to the receiver of the transceiver unit. This will activate the transmitter section 27 of transceiver unit 5, which in turn will emit the impact signal in impact area 7. In the example shown in FIG. 1 it is assumed that impact area 7 represents essentially an ellipse whose longer axis is perpendicular to trajectory 9. Equipment and/or simulation participants present in impact area 7 and carrying detectors responding to the signal of the transmitter of transceiver unit 5 are thus immediately after the firing informed of the fact that they are exposed to the impact of this weapon by the activation of their sensors.

In other words, transceiver unit 5 transforms the hit signal emitted by the simulation device of the weapon into an impact signal that covers impact area 7, i.e. also locations which cannot be attained by the hit signal of the weapon itself for physical reasons.

FIGs. 2 and 3 show transceiver unit 5 on a greatly enlarged scale. It comprises essentially three sections. Reflector section 20 is arranged at the top and serves for reflecting the laser signal emitted by the weapon back onto itself, thereby allowing the weapon to locate transceiver unit 5.

Sensor 22 is arranged in the center. It is comprised of a number of sensor elements 24, each of which surveys a sector. For example, the arrangement of FIG. 2 allows the determination of the horizontal (virtual) trajectory 9 with a resolution of 45 degrees. Sensor elements 24 may be usual photo-sensitive elements which are separated from each other by separating walls 26 in order to ensure the sector-shaped directional characteristic.

Transmitter 27 is arranged at the bottom of transceiver unit 5. It comprises a number of transmitter elements 29, each of which approximately covers a respective sector of the area surrounding the transceiver unit. Each transmitter element comprises a laser light source,

preferably a laser diode, capable of emitting a respective impact signal in the form of light laser. Furthermore, a control system of the transceiver unit 5 also controls the transmitting power of each of the transmitter elements 29 in order to control the range of the impact signal emitted by the transmitter elements each of which may therefore be respectively different and thereby to reproduce the shape of impact area 7.

The control both of the simulation device of the weapon and of transceiver unit 5 can be realized by conventional means. For example, each sensor may be connected to a threshold amplifier which responds when a signal is received and ensures that each transmitter element is supplied with a certain amount of energy whereby the range (distance) of the impact signal in the corresponding direction is adjusted. The resulting shape of the reproduced impact area 7 corresponds to the orientation of the respective sensor element 24 and thus to that of trajectory 9.

Control devices for this purpose are known to those skilled in the art and therefore need not be explained in more detail.

An alternative possibility of controlling transceiver unit 5 consists in providing the respective building 3 with a sufficiently powerful simulation computer which detects the weapons, particularly of the simulated type, that are monitored by the transceiver units and possibly fired only near the house and activates the corresponding transmitter units 20. With this arrangement, it is additionally possible to provide further transmitter units which are not integrated in the transceiver units, and/or to inform participants or equipment of their location in the impact area, e.g. by radio. Since this local computing unit may basically also be informed of the position and the number of all nearby participants, equipment, and weapons, it may simulate the application of the weapons, complementarily with the local transceiver units 5, even if they are not used for their actual purpose, e.g. for direct fire which may not be recognized by transceiver units 5 in certain circumstances. However, as the case may be, a certain delay and thus a less realistic simulation of the impact may be the result.

On the basis of the preceding description of a preferred embodiment, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various modifications can be made without departing from the scope of the invention as defined by the claims. For example if the requirements are less stringent, it is possible to omit the directional sensitivity of transmitter 27 as well as of sensor 22. If the range control and particularly also the directional characteristic of transmitter 27 are omitted, an essentially circular impact area surrounding the transceiver unit will be the simulated. Even if the lack of any directional characteristic of the sensor unit might possibly be acceptable,

the transceiver unit would then be incapable of discerning whether the special weapon is used as intended or whether it is e.g. aimed at the obstacle directly. A correct application of the weapon would then be assumed in every case.

Instead of light (laser), other means of data transmission could be considered, such as e.g. ultrasonic or radio signals, particularly of a high frequency, e.g. 2.4 GHz. However, in general, the latter are less suitable on account of their sensitivity to certain atmospheric conditions which would not substantially influence the course of the simulation otherwise.

Further possible modifications are:

- Displaceable separating walls between transmitter elements which are positioned according to the trajectory in such a manner as to allow a better reproduction of the impact area by the transmitter elements;

- The sections of a transceiver unit (reflector, sensor, transmitter) are in the form of separate parts, so as to allow particularly the transmitter to be positioned for optimum signal emission and/or to be addressed by a plurality of sensor/reflector units;

- A 360° detection range of the transceiver unit in order to be mounted on a vehicle or another obstacle and to be able to simulate fire onto the obstacle from any direction and an impact behind the obstacle;

- An additional effect unit for producing realistic effects such as smoke, explosion noise, light flashes.

Although the present invention has been described in relation to particular embodiments thereof, many other variations and modifications and other uses will become apparent to those skilled in the art. It is preferred, therefore, that the present invention be limited not by the specific disclosure herein, but only by the appended claims.